

HUNTER EDUCATION

newsletter

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF HUNTER EDUCATION
THE NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

■ June 2008

Coordinator's Comments

First of all, I want to thank all of you for making my first couple of months a great experience! Any time you go from one career to another one, there are thoughts of how it will work out and so far, so good.

I retired from the ND Army National Guard after 23 years of active service and 28 years total service. Originally from Lisbon and after spending most of my youth growing up in St. Paul, my family returned to Lisbon where I graduated high school! My experiences in rural N.D. were outstanding and I wouldn't trade it for anything. I enjoy the outdoors, through the many years of camping, fishing, some hunting and following our kids around to various sporting events! I volunteered to coach soccer and spent several years involved as a soccer club board member and president of the local soccer club. My wife, Pam and I have three older children (keep calling them kids), two boys and a girl! We enjoy living in Bismarck and we are grateful that our two granddaughters live right across the river in Mandan!

I saw this job as a challenge, something totally different than the military life that consumed much of my life and let's face it; I just wasn't prepared for "real" retirement at this point. What isn't different is working with dedicated, hard working North Dakotans and **VOLUNTEERS** like you! It's a special commitment that you have made to make a difference, not only to our youth, but to all of those that share an interest and love for the privilege to hunt

and enjoy our great outdoors.

My overall objective is to maintain this outstanding program and build on what we have in order to keep providing this service to our youth. We can't lose sight of the intent of Hunter Education and that is to educate future generations of enthusiastic, courteous and ethical gun and bow hunters. I do have a couple of ideas that I am considering, one is to establish Regional Coordinators to assist in the flow of information and second, an Advisory Board of instructors to assist me in course direction and materials. I did attend (and pass) the HE course again in April as a refresher and it will give me the opportunity to become a certified instructor so I can assist in course instruction!

If you have suggestions for our Hunter Education Program, don't hesitate to call or write. While I did receive many email addresses and I do realize that some of you don't have email access, but if you do, please send me a short email, that way I can add your address to the list! I would like to send out short articles, websites and hunting product information that I hope is useful to all.

Thanks for what you do, I look forward to meeting you and supporting you in any way I can! If you have any suggestions on how to improve this newsletter, let me know!

Jon

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2008 IHEA Conference

I had the opportunity to attend the IHEA Annual Conference in Fairview Heights, IL, the week of May 27th. It was a good conference and a chance to meet my counterparts from across the country and countries – South Africa, Mexico and Peru were represented, truly an international organization.

The day prior to the official conference was a presentation on “Ethics in Action”, moderated by Orion-The Hunter’s Institute: Eric Nuse & Associates. Jim Posewitz, retired wildlife biologist, the executive director of Orion and author of *Inherit The Hunt, Beyond Fair Chase and Rifle In Hand*, began the day with some history of the people that had the idea (Thoreau, Perkins-Marsh), those that changed things (Roosevelt, Leopold) and why we must continue to teach what it means to be an ethical hunter!

Dr. Bob Norton, University of Wisconsin – Madison and author of *The Hunter*, discussed his work on the topic of why people hunt and the stages of a hunter. His book explores the results of over 5,000 interviews with hunters.

Finally, Dr. Jim Tantillo, Cornell University, opened a whole new way to look at hunter ethics, the value of sport and the concept of hunter preference; based on his PhD dissertation, *Hunting – the Damnable Pleasure*. He lectures, writes and teaches nationally on hunter ethics and helped create the Ethics in Action program. Teaming up with Jim in this part of the presentation was Patt Dorsey, Colorado Wildlife; she is the former hunter education coordinator in Colorado and currently a regional wildlife manager in Durango, CO. She, along with Dr. Tantillo, developed

the first Ethics in Action workshop for the Izaak Walton League in 2001.

Thursday was the official opening of the conference with the keynote speaker, Dr Tantillo, Winchester/IHEA Awards Luncheon and various presentations. I should note here that Jim Carter was recognized for his outstanding service to the Hunter Education Program, congratulations Jim!

On Friday, we had the opportunity to experience the World Shooting and Recreational Complex in Sparta, IL. All I can say is, if you ever get the chance to see this outstanding complex, do so! Over 3 and 1/2 miles long, 100 trap houses, two shooting clay ranges, rifle/pistol ranges and 1,001 camping sites. They can accommodate up to 4,000 shooters, 14,000 visitors and vendors for major shooting events.

The conference concluded on Saturday with a session on Standards & Reciprocity – What we deliver and how we deliver it. It was an interesting discussion on best practices, definition of Field Day and the traditional classroom versus on-line. Indiana has initiated a complete on-line certification that requires no face time with instructors, this of course, was the focus of much discussion!

All in all, a great conference and while the programmed events were good and informational, the most rewarding part was the opportunity to meet and visit with vendors and other HE Coordinators. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Jeff Hopkins, HE Coord and his staff did an outstanding job in hosting the event.

Reminders and Notes

PATHWAYS TO HUNTING...

LOOKING FOR A FEW, GOOD VOLUNTEERS!

It's that time of year again and you should have received a card in the mail asking for your support at the State Fair, July 18th – 26th. We will cover various informational and activity stations, which include a brief demonstration on gun/bow handling and marksmanship, viewing a brief videotape on wildlife management and an opportunity to shoot on the air rifle and/or archery ranges.

Please consider participating in this worthwhile event for a day or two or three! It is fun and well received by thousands of youth and adults each year. Lodging will be reimbursed for those that spend two days and live more than 50 miles from Minot. Call Steph at 800-421-8358 or 701-328-6615.

TEACHING TIP

On written test day, offer the test in two separate classrooms. In one classroom, the students are on their own with one of the instructors supervising. In the other classroom, one of the instructors reads aloud each question so there is no confusion on the wording. This helps the younger students to do better on the test where there might be some confusion on the wording of certain questions. This is a simple thing, but so many students are nervous about taking tests, it helps to minimize the number of questions the students miss because of a simple reading error. We have had instructors using this technique and it works!

HE EXAM DATA GATHERING

In your box of course materials, you'll be receiving a large envelope for you to return your final exams. I am reviewing the exams and gathering some data in an effort to have some additional information before we make any changes!

INSTRUCTOR RECRUITING AND APPLICATIONS

Continue your outstanding efforts in recruiting new instructors! Since April 1st, we have sent out almost 20 applications to potential instructors. You are recruiting your replacements, so select those that are the best of the best for the future of our program! One of the things that I would stress to all new instructors is how important assisting a veteran instructor is and to be very comfortable before you take on the lead role.

NORTH DAKOTA HUNTER EDUCATOR'S ASSOCIATION

As a certified instructor you are eligible to become a member of our NDHEA, please contact the membership chairman, Charles Vasicek, 701-223-9797 or cvasicek@bis.midco.net. Together, we can work towards improving an already outstanding program through additional programs and activities.

INSTRUCTOR OBSERVATIONS & REMINDERS:

1. Students need to be 11 years old to attend the standard course, 16 years old for the Home Study course.
2. All classes must be registered with NDG&F, Hunter Education.
3. In order to receive credit, all instructors must sign the back of the rosters, printed name and signature.
4. Maintain a reasonable class size and ensure enough instructor staff to support them.
5. Positive attitude and first impressions are important, treat students fair and equal! Remember – your students are your customers, respect goes both ways.

Instructor Survey Results

A hearty thank you to all of you that took the time to respond with your comments! If you haven't yet replied, please do so, there is no deadline and your input is important. Out of the 688 sent out, we have received 180 surveys back or 26%, which is a fairly good response for a survey.

The comments so far have been very positive and there are some great ideas and suggestions for improvements. You will be hearing more about the survey results, but to give you an initial idea, these are the top three in each:

Three areas that you would improve:

1. The exam

2. Time spent on conservation and wildlife management
3. Updated Videos and DVD's

Three areas that you wouldn't change:

1. Workshops and Annual Conference
2. Hands-on gun handling (need more)
3. Instructor years of service awards and incentive program

We do appreciate the many positive comments regarding the support from this office and I want to recognize the job that Stephanie Thompson does, she works hard to see that you are getting what you need, when you need it!

North Dakota Hunting Incidents – 2007

| Game Type | Class | Casualty | Self Inflicted | Equip | Shooter Age | Victim Age | Major Factor |
|---------------------|-------|----------|----------------|---------|-------------|------------|---|
| Turkey (S) | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 45 | 19 | Failure to identify target |
| Grouse | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 13 | 48 | Shooter swinging on game |
| Duck/Goose | A | NF | Y | Shotgun | 45 | | Careless handling of firearm |
| Duck/Goose | A | NF | Y | Shotgun | 25 | | Careless handling of firearm |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 49 | | Shooter swinging on game |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 16 | 17 | Shooter swinging on game |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 58 | 64 | Shooter swinging on game |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 50 | 49 | Shooter swinging on game |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 36 | 35 | Victim out of sight of shooter |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 50 | 50 | Victim out of sight of shooter |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 55 | 55 | Victim out of sight of shooter |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 27 | 62 | Victim out of sight of shooter |
| Pheasant | A | NF | N | Shotgun | 50 | 74 | Victim moved into line of fire |
| Pheasant | A | NF | Y | Shotgun | 58 | | Discharge firearm in/on vehicle (Violation) |
| Dove/Pigeon | A | NF | Y | Rifle | 15 | | Careless handling of firearm |
| Coyote | A | NF | Y | Rifle | 19 | | Careless handling of firearm (Violation) |
| Deer | A | NF | N | Rifle | 40 | 26 | Shooter swinging on game |
| Deer | A | NF | N | Rifle | 54 | 82 | Discharge firearm in/on vehicle (Violation) |
| Deer | A | NF | N | Rifle | 18 | 37 | Failure to check beyond target |
| Average Age: | | | | | 38 | 44 | |

Game Type: Fall (F) Spring (S)

Casualty: NF = Non-Fatal, F = Fatal

Incidents are designated as Class A, B, C or D

Class A: Hunting Related Shooting Injuries or Fatalities

Class B: Non-Shooting Hunting Related Injuries or Fatalities

Class C: Non- Hunting Related Shooting Injuries

Class D: Property Damage



**HUNTER
EDUCATION
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS**

For Class Supplies: 1-800-421-8358

For Procedure and Policy Questions: 1-701-328-6316

If you move, please be sure to notify us. Email changes to sthompso@nd.gov or complete the attached form and mail to:

**North Dakota Game and Fish Department
Hunter Education
100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, ND 58501-5095**

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: State Zip

Home Telephone No.

(Detach and return)



Jon Hanson, Gun Safety Coordinator



Masthead Photo by Craig Bihrl